

Message Text

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15

ACTION EB-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 INT-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-01 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-06

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-01 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-20

STR-01 CEA-01 L-01 H-01 DRC-01 /074 W

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R 112210Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8337

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, VE, CS

SUBJECT: STATUS OF ALUMINUM SMELTER PROJECT

1. THE GENERAL MANAGER OF ALCOA OF COSTA RICA, BILLY G. MCNISH, CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON CHARGE OCTOBER 8 TO DISCUSS STATUS OF ALCOA'S ALUMINUM SMELTER PROPOSAL.

2. MCNISH SAID THAT ALCOA IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE DISENCHATED WITH WHAT IT SEES AS COSTA RICA GOVERNMENT'S UNRESPONSIVE ATTITUDE TO THE ALUMINUM SMELTER PROJECT. THE COMPANY BELIEVES THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DELAYING TACTICS MAY BE RELATED TO DISCUSSIONS BEING CARRIED ON WITH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT, AND MAY REFLECT A DESIRE TO PLAY OFF ONE INTERESTED PARTY AGAINST THE OTHER IN ORDER TO GET THE BEST POSSIBLE DEAL ON THE ALUMINUM PROJECT. MCNISH HAD HOPED TO GET SOME DEFINITIVE ACTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE BECAUSE HE EXPECTS TO VISIT COMPANY HEADQUARTERS IN PITTSBURGH AT THE END OF THIS MONTH TO PRESENT A STATUS REPORT.

3. ON OCTOBER 10, IN THE COURSE OF A CONVERSATION ON A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NUMBER OF OTHER TOPICS WITH THE MINISTER OF ECONOMY,

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE JORGE SANCHEZ, THE CHARGE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK SANCHEZ ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ALCOA PROJECT. MINISTER SANCHEZ SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO BE INTERESTED IN THE PROJECT AND HAS THE FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE PROJECT UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. SANCHEZ SAID THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE IN A POSITION TO MEET WITH ALCOA REPRESENTATIVES FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS SOME TIME IN NOVEMBER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALUMINUM, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), MINING INDUSTRY, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PROPOSALS (BID), GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANJO03944
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740291-0083
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741052/aaaabseh.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2003 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATUS OF ALUMINUM SMELTER PROJECT
TAGS: EMIN, VE, CS, ALCOA, (MCNISH, BILLY G), (SANCHEZ JORGE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005